

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 07609 010840Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /070 W

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5541

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PROP, US

SUBJ: HONG KONG COMMUNIST PRESS REACTION TO PRESIDENT AND
SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON CHINA

1. INITIAL REACTION IN THE LOCAL PRESS TO THE
SECRETARY'S ASIA SOCIETY SPEECH AND THE PRESIDENT'S JUNE 30
PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS ON CHINA WAS GNERALLY POSITIVE
ALTHOUGH EXCEPTION WAS TAKEN TO THE INCLUSION OF THE TERM
"PEACEFUL" WITH REFERENCE TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN
PROBLEM.

2. FIRST OFF THE MARK WAS THE "NEW EVENING POST'S" EDITOR
LO FU WHO ON JUNE 30 NOTED THE SECRETARY DID NOT MENTION THE
DEFENSE TREATY WITH TAIWAN. HE QUOTED FROM THE SPEECH "THAT
PROGRESS MAY NOT BE EASY OR IMMEDIATELY EVIDENT" BUT ADDED
THAT THE US "SHOULD NOT DELAY RESOLVING THE PROBLEM BY EMPHASIZING
THE DIFFICULTIES". LO FU ALSO COMMENTED ON THE SERETARY'S
MEETING WITH HAU TE-CHING, OBSERVING THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST PRC
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DELEGATION TO THE US WITH THE TERM "FOREIGN AFFAIRS" IN ITS TITLE.

3. THE MORE OFFICIAL "WEN WEI PAO" OF JULY 1 PUBLISHED A
COMMENTARY WHICH NOTED THAT THE SHIFT FROM CONFRONTATION TO
NEGOTIATION WITH THE PRC REPRESENTED A "PROFOUND CHANGE" IN
US POLICY. IT ALSO QUOTED SENATOR PERCY AND AMBASSADOR GATES'
REMARKS THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME TO NORMALIZE. NEVERTHE-

LESS, THE COMMENTARY TERMED THE PRESIDENT'S HOPE OF MAINTAINING THE PEACEFUL LIVES OF THE TAIWANESE "BLATANT INTERFERENCE IN CHINA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS" AND REITERATED THAT CHINA WILL DECIDE ON ITS OWN HOW TO LIBERATE TAIWAN. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANTLY, ALTHOUGH THE PRESIDENT ALSO USED THE TERM REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THIS WAS EDITED OUT AND NOT MENTIONED.

4. "TA KUG PAO", THE OTHER MAJOR PRO-PRC PAPER IN HONG KONG, GAVE THE SPEECH AND PRESS CONFERENCE SECOND BILLING AND THERE WAS NO COMMENTARY.

5. COMMENT: THE PAPERS SEEM TO WELCOME THE COMMENTS AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF US INTEREST IN NORMALIZATION, BUT CONTINUE TO OBJECT TO ANY REFERENCE TO US CONCERNS ABOUT TAIWAN'S FUTURE STATUS. ALTHOUGH THE HEADLINES IMPLY THAT THE US HAS DECIDED TO NORMALIZE, THE COMMENTARIES SHOW THEY UNDERSTAND THE FINAL DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE.
CROSS

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